

The New-York Historical Society

P R E S E N T S

City of Promise

ASPECTS OF JEWISH LIFE

IN NEW YORK 1654 • 1970

*Sponsored by the Central Synagogue
to Commemorate the 100th Anniversary
of the Laying of its Cornerstone*



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New Amsterdam
by Laurens Block
(cat. no. 318)

Notes on the Early History of the New York Jewish Community

by Mary Black

It was the Dutch West India Company and a group of citizens of New Amsterdam that came to the aid of the first small band of Jews to reach this American colony. Discrimination stemming from the Spanish Inquisition had forced them out of Portuguese Brazil. Their ship, bound for the Netherlands, was seized by pirates, but the captives were rescued by a French privateer aboard the *Ste. Catherine* (*St. Catrina? St. Charles?*), which arrived in New Amsterdam on September 1, 1654. The twenty-three Jewish passengers camped on the shore of the island while seeking ways to pay off their passage. Some of the Dutch burghers assisted them by buying the few possessions they had brought and then returning these clothes and furnishings to the impoverished newcomers. Governor Peter Stuyvesant, attempting to send them away from the island, was ordered to let them stay by his superiors, the directors of the Dutch West India Company, possibly because the company had several important Jewish shareholders in the Netherlands. To this first group of Jewish settlers the very name of New Amsterdam must have been a pleasant reminder of the kind treatment accorded them by the Dutch of old Amsterdam.

In Dutch New Amsterdam, where only Christians—and only members of the Dutch Reformed Church, at that—were granted the right of public worship, Jews were

allowed to hold services in the homes of members of their own tiny community. But in 1664, when New Amsterdam surrendered to the English, and New Amsterdam became New York, the Dutch and the Jews alike became British subjects. By 1673 the Jews were holding public services in rented quarters on Beaver Street; at the end of the seventeenth century the congregation, Shearith Israel, numbered about a hundred persons.

As in any newly settled Jewish community, a burial ground and a burial society were primary communal requirements, to make possible the fulfillment of the Jewish laws for the care and burial of the dead. One of the earliest Jewish cemeteries in New York, founded in 1682, can still be seen in Lower Manhattan. But it was not until 1730 that the first synagogue building was dedicated—a tiny structure on Mill Street modeled after the synagogues in Amsterdam. It was scarcely large enough to accommodate even the adult members of Congregation Shearith Israel in that year. By this time, however, many descendants of the original immigrants had become settled burghers and successful merchants with interests in the trade and manufactures that made New York's goods among those most sought after in the other American colonies and in Curaçao, London, and Amsterdam.

A process of acculturation had thus begun which was



Decalogue: Tablets of Moses
 attributed to Marcus Charles Illions
 (cat. no. 283)

always to be an important aspect of Jewish life on this continent. But the unique events of Jewish life are ritual ceremonies that have evolved over long centuries from the ancient customs of a nomadic and pastoral people. Linked to the flow and change of seasons, to the harvest, and to the miraculous events of Jewish history, these ceremonies made a community of a devoted few.

There were fewer than six hundred Jews in New York in 1825; by 1869 it was estimated that there were 40,000 among the city's population. Most of them had arrived in the great waves of immigration that took place after 1836, when a large number of German, chiefly Bavarian, Jews fled to this country. More came from Germany, Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary after the revolution of 1848. While each succeeding wave of immigrants was given charitable aid by the established Jewish families of the city, the resident population found it had little in common, socially or intellectually, with the newcomers. Each new group in turn began the hard struggle to earn a decent living and to learn the customs of its new country.

Until the Russian pogroms of 1881, the New York Jewish community was made up chiefly of emigrants from Germany and the countries that surrounded it, but in that year the trickle of East European Jews rose to a flood. By 1900 the New York Jewish population num-

bered 600,000, and in the next ten years it had more than doubled. While mass immigration ended soon after 1924, the years preceding the Second World War saw another spurt in Jewish immigration in a people's flight from Nazi persecution.

The principle enunciated at mid-seventeenth century when Peter Stuyvesant was instructed by the Dutch West India Company that the Jews might stay "provided the poor among them shall not become a burden to the company or to the community, but be supported by their own nation" was simply the extension to the New World of a tradition that had been followed by the immigrants in the Old. For *zedakah*—the practice of charity as an aspect of justice—was an obligation laid upon them by their religion, and it has continued to be an obligation of the New York Jewish community for the more than three hundred years of its existence. During these three centuries contrasts between Jewish and Gentile ritual, between the rites of the Sephardim (Jews of Spanish and Portuguese origin) and the Ashkenazim (Jews of Central and East European origin), between established Jewish families and those of the later immigrant influxes, contrasts even between first- and second-generation Jews, provide a restless and changing scene set against the background of an ancient people bound by a common faith.

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City of Promise

Aspects of Jewish Life in New York

1654 · 1970



View of entrance to the exhibition



Ark curtain
(cat. no. 141)

STANDOUTS FROM THE CROWD

CITY OF PROMISE opens on the present century, and on a view of Jewish life in New York in most respects no different from New York life in general. Crowds that are predominantly Jewish are seen watching the baseball scores on a neon-lighted sign erected by *The Jewish Daily Forward*, gathered before the doors of Temple Emanu-El for the funeral of theatrical impresario Charles Frohman, assembled at the dedication of the Jonah B. Wise Community House of Central Synagogue. In the photographs of these crowds—watching, protesting, waiting—few faces stand out in the crush of people drawn together by a common concern or endeavor.

Another assemblage of New Yorkers is made up of the one hundred portraits (selected from many photographs of Jews prominent in New York life) of individual figures who represent the achievements of many. Each stands for the many who have attained fame in science and industry, in philanthropy, religion, politics, letters, or the fine and performing arts. The purpose in bringing together this galaxy is to single out people of achievement in New York life all of whom happen, almost coincidentally, to be Jewish, by birth, affiliation, or both.

In most instances a special interest or skill is suggested in these informal camera studies. Some of the portraits are almost a hundred years old, others are as recent as the morning newspaper.



Standouts from the crowd (cat. nos. 2 and 3)





View of installation



Samuel Gompers addressing members of
the Shirtwaist Makers' Union at Cooper Union
(*cat. no. 4*)

Funeral of Charles Frohman at Temple Emanu-El
(*cat. no. 11*)



... the Jewish people are held together, not by the same blood ties, but by common history, experience, culture, religion, tradition, and aspiration.

RABBI LOUIS I. NEWMAN

Steerage
photographed by Alfred Stieglitz
(cat. no. 23)



During the mass immigration from Eastern Europe that began in 1881 and continued (except for the war years 1914–18) until 1924, thousands of Jews fleeing European oppression came to the land of opportunity and the city of promise. At first their circumstances were light-years removed from those of the German Jewish immigrants who had arrived between 1850 and 1870 and were by now prospering in New York. The new arrivals worked long hours in sweatshops and at home amid overcrowded and sordid conditions.

Jewish immigrant life on the Lower East Side in the late nineteenth century is documented by photographs of people engaged in a difficult struggle for existence. Yet even these crowded scenes afford a view of the vitality, hope, and laughter that eventually brought prosperity to first- and second-generation families. A sweatshop worker grins broadly at the man behind the camera. The Sabbath is as much the Bride in a coal cellar as in the elegant houses of the philanthropists who gave most to improve the lives of impoverished immigrants.

A common reverence for learning and a love of work and devotion to family characterized each succeeding wave of new arrivals. Jewish children faithfully attended

both secular and religious schools, and the professions for which their parents yearned often became a reality for second-generation Jews.

Community ties were strengthened by periodicals in Hebrew and Yiddish and by the Yiddish theatre. On the one hand, these maintained group languages and commemorated group experiences; on the other hand, by direction and exhortation they speeded the process of acculturation.

Out of the oppression of the sweatshop system arose the Jewish labor movement, influenced and inspired above all by the gifted editor and novelist Abraham Cahan, editor of the socialist and pro-labor Yiddish newspaper *The Jewish Daily Forward*. Meanwhile the hard lot of the newly arrived immigrant was eased by settlement houses and by such organizations as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Home for Aged and Infirm Hebrews. In addition, organizations like the Educational Alliance and the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Associations promoted the new citizen's social and educational adjustment. The process of acculturation which had always been an important aspect of Jewish life on this continent continued.



Castle Garden
from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper
(cat. no. 19)



Citizenship class
(cat. no. 25)

THE LABORS OF THE FIRST GENERATION

Contributing to the occupational pattern that emerged among the Jewish immigrant workers at the end of the nineteenth century were numerous groupings based on ties formed in "the old country." Many of the Bohemian Jews worked at cigar and cigarette making; and these immigrants were for the most part members of Ahawath Chesed (one of the two congregations that combined to become the congregation of Central Synagogue). There is a photograph showing a family at work making cigars in their living quarters, and another showing a Jewish cigar store with a sign in Yiddish advertising its Russian, French, and Austrian snuff: *Ir vilt a richtigen shtarker schneck tabak, koont arain un übertsagt aich: prabah iz frai* ("If you want a real strong snuff tobacco, come in and be convinced; free sample").



Sweatshop
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
(cat. no. 31)



Moe Levy's Factory
photographed by Byron
(cat. no. 33)

Bohemian cigar makers
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
(cat. no. 34)





View of installation—The tobacco industry

FROM PEDDLER TO MERCHANT

By 1870 the sight of the Jewish peddler traveling by foot or wagon was a familiar one on New York streets. His literacy and his capacity for work often made his itinerant occupation but a brief episode in his advance toward owning a small store or—as occasionally happened—a large mercantile establishment. Progress from a small one-man business to grand enterprise is strikingly exemplified by the story of the Straus family and Macy's.

Lazarus Straus, a landowner and grain trader in his native town of Otterberg in Bavaria, was a liberal who supported constitutional reform in the German revolution of 1848. When the cause failed, he emigrated to America. Starting as a traveling peddler in Georgia, he prospered and soon opened a general store. During the Civil War he was active in bringing in supplies from England and as a cotton broker. At the end of the war he paid off the indebtedness he had incurred as a result of the South's defeat and moved to New York with his family. In the city he and his sons, Isidor and Nathan, established a small crockery business on Chambers Street. In 1874 the firm leased space in R. H. Macy's department store for the sale of imported china and glass. In 1896 the Strauses bought the store from R. H. Macy's successors in a million-dollar transaction.



Macy's
(cat. no. 62)



View of installation—
Vignette of Broadway

"... provided that the poor among them shall not become a burden . . . to the community, but be supported by their own nation"

The history of the Jewish Child Care Association of New York goes back to the year 1822, when the first of its predecessor child-care agencies, the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, was founded.

In 1822 the Hebrew Benevolent Society was founded, and for the ensuing forty years it provided help for Jews who were sick, needy, or orphaned. A reorganization in the 1860s brought increased help to orphans through the Hebrew Benevolent and Orphan Asylum Society. In 1879 the Hebrew Sheltering Guardian Society was formed to take care of a growing number of orphans; in 1912 the new society made history by establishing the first Jewish cottage-plan institution, the Pleasantville Cottage School.

Today a variety of placements are available to meet the varying needs of children, but the trend is toward individual care in foster homes or in small care units, a trend begun in 1923 with the founding of the Jewish Children's Clearing Bureau, which provided central coordination for the numerous children's services in New York.



Bar Mitzvah Day
(cat. no. 82)

Henry Street Nurses' Settlement playground
photographed by Jacob A. Riis (cat. no. 84)



By mid-nineteenth century the Jewish population of New York numbered about 12,000. In 1852, almost two hundred years after the first Jews had landed in New York, the Jewish community founded a hospital of its own, for "benevolent, charitable, and scientific purposes," where sick and infirm Jews might be cared for under Jewish auspices. It was named The Jews' Hospital in the City of New York (Bet Holim). Although founded as a sectarian institution, Jews' Hospital treated wounded soldiers of all faiths during the Civil War and likewise made no restrictions during the Draft Riots of 1864. In that year it

adopted the principle of nonsectarianism, and in 1866 its name was changed to Mount Sinai Hospital.

The Montefiore Hospital, now the Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center, established in 1884, is another of New York's great medical institutions originally established for the care of Jewish patients.

Such institutions represent a "combination of a deep-seated traditional sense of communal responsibility for the sick and infirm . . . with one of the most modern aspects of the American ethos—no racial or religious barriers to service."



Jews' Hospital
(cat. no. 86)

Men's Ward: Mount Sinai Hospital
(cat. no. 91)



As I look back on the Yiddish and the English press in the last decade of the nineteenth century I cannot help feeling that the former did more for the education of its readers than the latter. Having no army of reporters to dig up sensational news, the Yiddish press necessarily paid more attention to things of permanent interest. It tried to give its readers something of enduring and substantial value. I therefore have never been able to share the views of my fellow citizens who look upon the very existence of a foreign press as a sort of treason. . . . The American tradition is federalism, which allows for diversity instead of dull

uniformity. The very name "United States" and our motto, "E Pluribus Unum," express this.

All great civilizations have resulted from the contributions of many peoples, and a richer American culture can come only if the Jews, like other elements, are given a chance to develop under favorable conditions their peculiar genius. The Yiddish press has prepared millions of Jewish people to take a worthy part in American civilization while also promoting the natural self-respect to which Jews are entitled because of their character and history.

Morris Raphael Cohen, in *A Dreamer's Journey* (1949)



View of installation—The Yiddish press



View of installation—Jewish theatre

Grand Street Theatre
 photographed by Byron
 (cat. no. 71)



Mordecai Manuel Noah
 by John Wesley Jarvis
 (cat. no. 69)



Diplomat, journalist, playwright, and Jewish leader, Noah proposed (1825) a plan to turn Grand Island in the Niagara River, near Buffalo, into a "City of refuge for the Jews," to be named Ararat. Although this plan for the solution of the problems of oppressed Jewries failed of acceptance, Noah continued to advocate the mass settlement of the Jews, in 1844 taking a stand in favor of the restoration of Palestine as the Jewish national homeland. Throughout his life a leader and spokesman for the Jews of America, Noah served this city as sheriff, judge, and surveyor of the port of New York and was a major in the New York State militia.

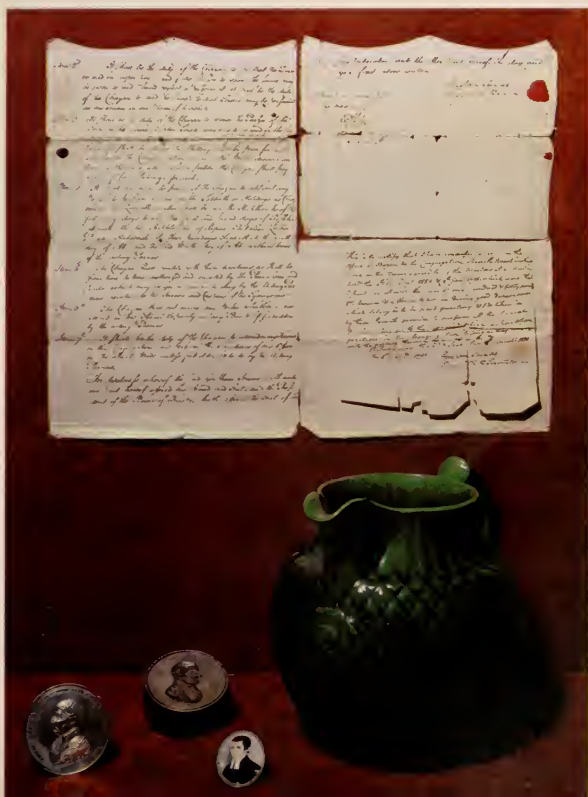
Serving as a selective index to Jewish interests and achievements is a large collection of medals. The awards range from excellence in Jewish studies to internationally recognized achievement in the arts and sciences. Some of the medals commemorate events in American Jewish history, some honor those who have helped to shape this history.

The design and execution of the medals vary considerably. Among them are pretty bibelots of interest only to the recipient and his immediate family, as well as fine examples of the medalist's art such as the graceful miniature struck to commemorate the three-hundredth anniversary of the first Jewish settlement in New Amsterdam and the plaque by Chaim Gross honoring Governor Herbert H. Lehman.

Most of the medals are from the Daniel Friedenberg collection and from the collection given by his father, Samuel Friedenberg, to The Jewish Museum, an extraordinary assemblage of examples of this art form (many of them were commissioned by Samuel Friedenberg himself), which throws a bright beam of light onto

major events and personages in American Jewish history.

The tradition of using struck and cast medals of precious material in commemoration of achievements and events is an ancient one linked to the even more ancient tradition of the art of coinage. The medal is still a popular form of tribute, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, the areas from which most American Jews came to America. The continued use of medals in this country accents the heritage that the Jews brought—and still bring—to American life. The earliest medal shown honors the first American-born rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel, Gershom Mendez Seixas, who began his fifty-year ministry in 1766. Letters and portraits commemorate this patriot, who on the eve of the Revolution advocated closing the synagogue rather than going on under the British, and took the congregation's Torah scrolls and ceremonial objects out of New York for safekeeping, first to Stratford, Connecticut, and then to Philadelphia. In 1784 Seixas returned to New York and to his duties in Congregation Shearith Israel.



View of installation—
Objects associated with Rev. Gershom Seixas
(cat. nos. 235, 101, 99, and 100)

RELIGIOUS LIFE—JEWISH CEREMONIAL ART

In shimmering contrast to photographs of crowd scenes of Jewish immigrant life on the Lower East Side are the ceremonial objects used in Jewish religious observances at home and in the synagogue.

Ever since the time of Jacob Franks (parnas, or president, of Congregation Shearith Israel in 1730, when the first synagogue building in America was dedicated), devout Jews have sought out beautiful ceremonial objects to add meaning and richness to Jewish observance. Franks, for example, in a letter to his son in England, makes a request for *etz chayim*, the wooden staves on which the Torah scroll is wound. Since wooden objects would have been easily available in the colonies, it is believed that this was a slip of the pen and that he meant *rimmonim*, the decorative metal finials used to top the Torah staves.

In sending to the country where he was born for ceremonial objects Jacob Franks was setting a pattern of preference for the designs of one's native country. It is this reason, perhaps, that accounts for the fact that most

of the ceremonial silver of American synagogues is of English or European origin. However, such pieces have been made here from colonial days to the present, seldom more beautifully than by Myer Myers (1723-1797), the New York silversmith, who was a member of Congregation Shearith Israel. In the synagogues of congregations that follow the Ashkenazic ritual, the dressed Torah scroll customarily wears, over the mantle, an ornamental shield, usually made of silver or silver and gilt and suspended from the staves by a silver chain. This breastplate often has in the center a slot for the insertion of an exchangeable plaque bearing the name of the Sabbath on which the scroll is to be used.

Out of reverence for the sacred Torah, a special pointer, the *yad* (hand), is used by the reader in following the script. The *yad* is a long thin rod, usually ending in the shape of a small hand with a pointing finger. Silver is the material most commonly used; ivory and coral are also used, alone or in combination.

View of installation—Jewish ceremonial objects





Rimmonim
by Myer Myers
(cat. no. 144)

THE TORAH SCROLL

The Torah scroll is the most sacred of Jewish religious objects, and strict rules govern the materials used, the writing of the text, and the handling and care of the Book of the Law. The text is the Pentateuch, the Five Books of Moses. The two ends of the parchment scroll on which the text is handwritten are wound around wood staves, one at either end. These rods, called the *etz chayim*, or "trees of life," are symbols that occur with great frequency in Jewish art.

The weekly reading from the Torah is the highlight of the Sabbath service. The congregation rises as the Holy Ark is opened and the Torah is brought forth and laid on the reading table on the *bimah*. The Ark, now usually part of the architecture of the synagogue, is most often located on the east wall so that the congregation may sit facing in the direction of the holy city; it takes its name from the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple at Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple and during the long centuries of wandering and persecution, the Ark and the Torah scrolls were small so that they might be carried from place to place.

The Torah mantle, a cloth case used to cover the scroll, may fall like a flared skirt, the form in common use in Sephardic synagogues, or it may be shaped like a flattened cylinder, a form used by Ashkenazic synagogues. The Torah staves may be topped by two *rimmonim* (metal headpieces or finials, usually of silver); these are more or less in the form of a pomegranate and are often decorated with bells. The pomegranate and the bell are motifs harking back to the Temple; we read in Exodus (28:34) of "a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the skirts of the robe round about." *Rimmonim* are favored

by Sephardic congregations, while Ashkenazic congregations may incline toward the single Torah crown covering both staves, in place of the two *rimmonim*.

With the exception of the *yad* suspended from the Torah scroll at the right (illustration below left), which is from the collection of The Jewish Museum, these Torah scrolls and ornaments are part of the ceremonial treasure of Central Synagogue; the scrolls are displayed as they might appear in the Ark during the High Holy Days.

The *rimmonim* (cat. no. 148) on the Torah scroll at the left are Dutch, c. 1830, and the silver-and-gilt breastplate (cat. no. 156) was made in Rotterdam, c. 1780.

The ornaments on the Torah scroll in the center are nineteenth-century: the *rimmonim* (cat. no. 146) are from Austria, the breastplate (cat. no. 160) from Germany, and the *yad* (cat. no. 165) from Galicia.

The Torah scroll at the right has mid-nineteenth-century *rimmonim* from Budapest (cat. no. 147) and a silver-and-gilt breastplate of the same period from Austria (cat. no. 161); the silver-and-gilt *yad* (cat. no. 276) is a modern piece.



Torah breastplate
(cat. no. 157)



View of installation—Traveling Ark and Torah

BURIAL—THE FIRST COMMUNAL ACTION

In Jewish practice the burial of the dead is approached with reverence as a sacred duty. Before the dedication, in 1730, of the first Jewish synagogue of New York, two burial grounds had already been established.

It is likely that the location of the first Jewish burial ground in New York was near the second Jewish cemetery, seen in the illustration from *Valentine's Manual* of 1861. This second ground—the Chatham Square (or New Bowery) Cemetery—established in 1682, is where Gershom Mendez Seixas lies buried, near the grave of his brother, Benjamin Mendez Seixas, one of the founders of the New York Stock Exchange. In 1805, when Shearith Israel was still the only congregation of Jews in the city, a third graveyard was consecrated, on what is now West 11th Street.

Death and Mourning Customs
from *Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel*
(cat. no. 237)



Ancient view of the junction of Pearl and Chatham Streets
(cat. no. 239)





David Grim drew his map of New York in his old age from his memory of the city as it appeared in 1742-44. Included in the map (upper right) is his sketch of the earliest building constructed as a place of Jewish worship—the first synagogue of Congregation Shearith Israel. A tiny building on Mill (now South William) Street, scarcely able even in the year of its dedication to

accommodate the adult members of the congregation, it is listed on the map as no. 17. The Jewish burial ground on Chatham Street is easier to locate (above and to the left of “Hughson Gibbeted”).

The block village and map are from the collections of The New-York Historical Society.

PASSOVER IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF JACOB FRANKS, 1730

In 1730 there were some 8,500 persons living in New York. In that same year there were only 29 Jews named in the assessment lists as heads of families. Yet, at the time of the Passover festival in 1730, the small community dedicated its first synagogue building, on Mill Street.

The *parnas* (president) of the congregation was Jacob Franks. Both he and his wife, Bilah Abigail (daughter of Moses Levy and Levy's first wife), were from Ashkenazic families; they became the parents of nine children. Jacob Franks and his father-in-law were successful merchants who had come to this country from England. Life in the Franks' household is well documented not only in the extant letters and accounts dealing with Congregation Shearith Israel but also in the spirited and witty letters written by Abigail to her eldest son, Naphtali, from 1733 to 1748, when he was living in England.

Abigail Franks' bright and sometimes acerbic turn of mind is apparent in these worldly, gossipy missives, in which she reveals her distaste for her father's second wife and recounts the closing of her heart and her door for a time to her daughter Phila because of her marriage outside the faith, to Oliver Delancey.

While Abigail deplors the dissension between Sephardim and Ashkenazim, she also rejoices in her acceptance by her Gentile peers: "Still it Gives me a Seceret pleasure to Observe the faire Charec[sic]ter Our Family has in the place by Jews and Christians." Like all Jews in the eighteenth century, whether they followed the Sephardic or the Ashkenazic rite, the Franks family were Orthodox (although they did not apply that designation to themselves);

they strictly followed the dietary laws and observed the Sabbath and other holy days at home and in the synagogue.

In the Franks' household the search for leaven would have taken place on the day before Passover eve, the night of the first Seder feast: all leavened food was cleared from the house and matzah replaced bread. Plates, cups, pitchers, and platters were laid out in readiness for the ritual foods of Passover. The Haggadah of Passover, describing the Exodus from Egypt, might have been open to an illustration of the Seder.

Three plates are set out for three matzot which symbolize the structure of the Jewish community, comprising Priests, Levites, and Israelites. Four goblets for wine are in readiness; since a fifth is called for in some Passover ceremonies, it is explained as being the cup set out for the coming of the prophet Elijah, who, according to tradition, might arrive at any Jewish household on Passover eve, bringing with him the promised Messiah.

Among the dishes was one for the shankbone of a lamb, commemorating sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem, a plate for haroseth, the ground fruit and nuts suggesting the mortar used in brickmaking by the enslaved Jews in Egypt, and a plate for parsley and bitter herbs, symbolizing the harsh conditions under which the Jews labored in building the pyramids while in bondage to their Egyptian taskmasters.

During the Seder it was traditional for one member of the family, dressed as a wanderer, to answer questions and explain the Exodus from Egypt.



Bilah Abigail Franks
by the de Peyster limner
(cat. no. 170)





View of installation—Pewter and sideboard
(cat. nos. 178 and 179)



The Search for Leaven
from Picart, *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses*
(cat. no. 174)



View of installation—with Haggadah



Haggadah
(cat. no. 177)

When the Jews, under the leadership of Judah Maccabee, defeated the Syrians and regained the Second Temple, they cleansed and rededicated it. Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, celebrated the legendary miraculous burning of one small cruse of oil for eight days during the rededication.

At home Chanukah is celebrated with prayers, songs, and the playing of games. The Chanukah menorah has eight candles, or lights, and a shamash, or service lamp,

for lighting them; starting with one light, on each of the eight nights of the festival an additional candle or lamp is lighted as the benedictions are recited.

Menorot follow closely in their design the architectural trends prevailing in the country and period of their creation. Like the other ceremonial objects used in American homes and synagogues, many of the old Chanukah menorot originated in the countries from which American Jews emigrated.

Menorah
(cat. no. 205)



View of installation—
Chanukah, the Seixas household, 1776

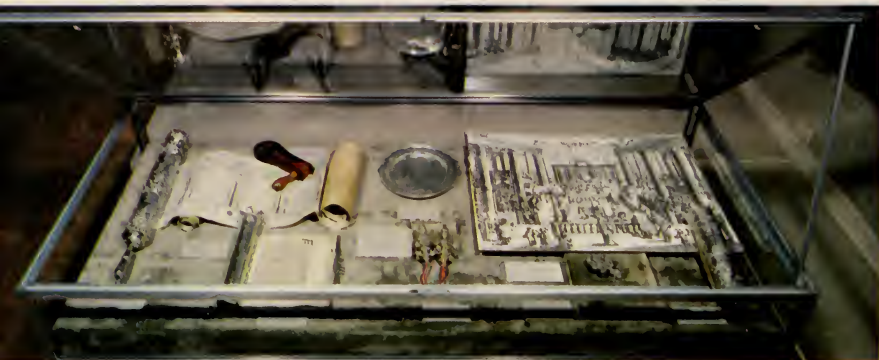


The events commemorated by Purim, the Feast of Lots (which takes place on the 14th of the Jewish month Adar, usually in March), are related in the Biblical Book of Esther: how the valorous Queen Esther, consort of Ahasuerus, King of Persia, risked her life to save her people, the Jews of Persia, from death at the hands of the wicked courtier Haman.

On Purim the scroll containing the story of Esther—the Megillah—is read in the synagogue. During the reading the congregation responds to the odious name of Haman by drowning it out with the sound of gragers (noisemakers).

Because the sacred name of the Almighty does not appear in it, the text of the Megillah could be embellished; it was also often enclosed in an ornate silver case. The elaborately encased illuminated Megillah came to be a customary gift from bride to groom, and hence many beautiful old examples survive.

Purim is a holiday on which gifts of edible delicacies are brought to friends and on which it is an obligation to remember the poor. The traditional Purim plates, used for presenting gifts or for holding Hamantaschen, pastries in the shape of Haman's hat, are often made of pewter and faience.



View of installation—Case with objects associated with Purim

View of installation





Succoth
from Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(cat. no. 251)

A reminder of the Jews' wandering in the wilderness, the autumn festival of Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles, is also one of thanksgiving for the harvest. In commemoration of the tents in which the Israelites lived in the wilderness, and perhaps of the little huts in which harvesters lived, succoth (booths) are set up in the open. The booth may be of any material, but the roof, through which it must be possible to see the sky, is made of leafy branches; the whole structure is decorated with the plenty of the harvest, including as many as possible of the fruits and vegetables with which the Promised Land was blessed.

In observance of Succoth, meals are eaten in these bowers. The blessings said before meals during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles include the benediction over the lulav (palm branch bound with willow branches and myrtle) and the ethrog; the four traditional Succoth plants—citron, palm, myrtle, and willow—are also carried in procession and waved as part of the synagogue service.

Pieces from The New-York Historical Society's collection of Tiffany glass and mercury glass have been incorporated into this vignette of Succoth as it might have been observed by a prosperous New York Jewish family of the late nineteenth century. The plates are similar to the Tiffany glass Succoth plates belonging to Congregation Shearith Israel.

View of installation—The Succoth as it might have been observed
by a prosperous New York Jewish family late in the nineteenth century



THE HIGH HOLY DAYS

The High Holy Days begin with Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and end ten days later with the awesome Yom Kippur, or Day of Atonement. The days between—the Days of Penitence—are a time for reflection and prayer.

Rosh Hashanah takes place on the first of the Jewish month of Tishri (which usually falls in September). It begins the year with a day of religious celebration observed in the synagogue. A distinctive feature of the service is the sounding of the Shofar (ram's horn) calling the congrega-

tion to remembrance of God and renewal of the spirit.

Like the Sabbath and all Jewish festivals, Yom Kippur opens the evening before, at sundown; the evening service begins with the chanting of Kol Nidrei, the solemn and sacred prayer that has given its name to the entire eve of Yom Kippur. Traditionally the observance of Yom Kippur involves fasting from sundown to sundown and spending the day in prayer and meditation in the synagogue; the services include the Yizkor, or memorial service, for deceased relatives.

View of installation—above: The Moon Worshipers
by David Aronson
(cat. no. 273)

below: The Moon Worshipers
from Kirchner, *Jüdisches Ceremoniel*
(cat. no. 272)

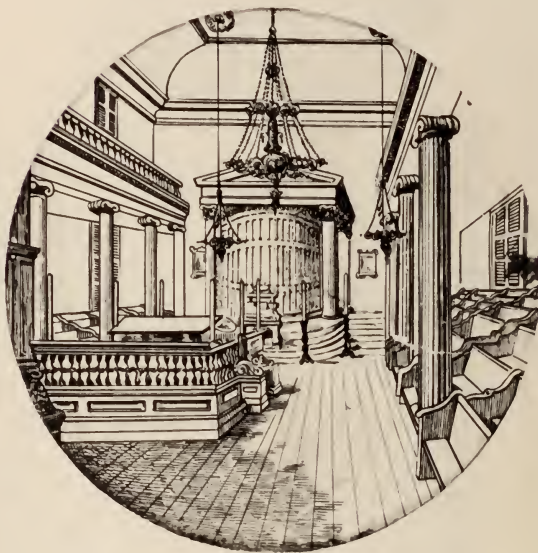




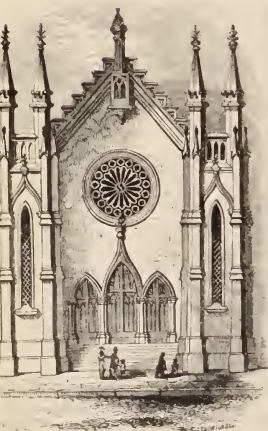
Decalogue: Tablets of Moses
(cat. no. 281)

For 170 years Shearith Israel was the sole Jewish congregation in the city of New York and served the entire Jewish community. From its founding, in 1655, it followed the Sephardic ritual familiar to its Spanish and Portuguese members, even after they came to be outnumbered by Ashkenazic Jews. In 1825 the first congregation to follow the Ashkenazic ritual and the second synagogue in New York—Congregation B'nai Jeshurun—was established.

By 1852 fourteen other synagogues were functioning in the city to accommodate its growing Jewish population. The two congregations which later formed the Central Synagogue were founded in 1839 and 1846 respectively. Many of the synagogue buildings were distinguished examples of contemporary architecture; several photographs, prints, and paintings capture the beauty of these buildings.



Exterior and interior of the Crosby Street Synagogue
(cat. nos. 211 and 212)



B'nai Jeshurun Temple
(cat. no. 286)



K'lal Adath Jeshurun Synagogue
(cat. no. 290)



FIFTH AVENUE FROM 42ND STREET, LOOKING NORTH

Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street
by Max Williams
 (cat. no. 287)

THE SABBATH

The now universally accepted idea of Sabbath-keeping originated in ancient Israel and remains central to Judaism, although total observance is no longer the rule. But the devout Jew has never ceased to recognize the seventh day as a sacred one in which his faith is reaffirmed and strengthened. The Sabbath lasts from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday, and among the Orthodox all labor ceases during this time.

The mistress of the household ushers in the Sabbath by lighting and blessing the Sabbath lights. Then, with the family gathered for the Sabbath meal, the head of the family, over a cup of wine, recites the Kiddush, the prayer for the sanctification of the Sabbath. The Kiddush cup must be whole and perfect, and for this reason cups of silver, gilt, or pewter are most often used. After the Kiddush has been pronounced, and everyone has drunk of the wine, the two loaves of challah, or Sabbath bread, are blessed and partaken of before the Sabbath meal is begun.

The observance of the Sabbath, traditionally a day of prayer and instruction, is as closely linked to synagogue services as to home ritual. In the synagogue the service is led by the Rabbi, assisted by the Hazan, or Cantor. The congregation joins in the prayers and hymns, and individual members of the congregation are honored by being called up to the bimah, or reading platform, to participate in the reading of the portions of the Torah and the Prophets for the week.

As soon as the daylight has faded and the Sabbath is over, the Havdalah ceremony takes place. The head of the household recites a prayer dealing with the distinction between the sacred and the profane and pronounces blessings over wine, spices, and light. The association of spices with the ushering out of the Sabbath is an ancient and symbolic one, and some of the most beautiful pieces of Jewish ceremonial art are the spice containers created for this service.



Reading from the Scroll
(cat. no. 303)

Lighting the Sabbath candles
photographed by Arnold Eagle
(cat. no. 302)





Spice container
(cat. no. 314)

Catalog of the exhibition

STARRED (*) ENTRIES ARE ILLUSTRATED

STANDOUTS FROM THE CROWD

1 The Fine and the Performing Arts

Richard Adler, David Belasco, Gertrude Berg, Irving Berlin, Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Dr. Leopold Damrosch, Walter Damrosch, Linda Darnell, Jo Davidson, Abraham Erlanger, Charles Frohman, Daniel Frohman, George Gershwin, Ira Gershwin, Alma Gluck, Edwin Franko Goldman, Chain Gross, Oscar Hammerstein I, Oscar Hammerstein II, Sam Harris, Moss Hart, Jascha Heifetz, George Jessel, Al Jolson, George S. Kaufman, Danny Kaye, Jerome Kern, André Kostelanetz, Oscar Levant, Sidney Lumet, David Merrick, Arnold Moss, George Jean Nathan, Louise Nevelson, Joseph Papp, Roberta Peters, Molly Picon, Florence Reed, Elmer Rice, Sigmund Romberg, Jerry Ross, Ben Shahn, Lee Shubert, John Shubert, Oscar Straus, Barbra Streisand, David Warfield, Ed Wynn, Efrem Zimbalist

*2 Journalism, Literature, and Architecture

Max Abramowitz, Harry N. Abrams, Franklin P. Adams, Saul Bellow, Abraham Cahan, Edna Ferber, Ben Hecht, Fannie Hurst, Alfred A. Knopf, Walter Lippmann, Norman Mailer, Philip Roth, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Louis Sobol, Walter Winchell

*3 Merchants, Bankers, Philanthropists, Politicians, and Professionals

Dr. Felix Adler, Bernard Baruch, Lyman G. Bloomingdale, Albert Einstein, Felix Frankfurter, Sanford Garelik, Arthur Goldberg, Mr. and Mrs. M. R. Guggenheim, Minnie Guggenheimer, Senator Jacob K. Javits, Florence Kahn, Otto H. Kahn, Governor Herbert H. Lehman, Samuel D. Leidesdorf, Arthur Levitt, Adolph Lewisohn, Henry Morgenthau and Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Nathan M. Ohrbach, Howard Samuels, Dr. Béla Schick, Jacob H. Schiff, Mrs. Jacob H. Schiff, Mortimer Schiff, Herbert Schwarz, Isaac Newton Seligman, Mrs. Isaac Newton Seligman, Emanuel M. Steindler, J. Jacques Stone, Mr. and Mrs. Isidor Straus, Nathan Straus, Mr. and Mrs. Felix M. Warburg, Edmund W. Waterman, Mrs. C. L. Weinberg, Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise

*4 Samuel Gompers addressing members of the Shirtwaist Makers' Union at Cooper Union photograph, c. 1915

5 Run on an East Side bank photograph, February 16, 1912

6 Protest meeting at Union Square photograph, c. 1901

7 Watching the baseball scores on the Lower East Side photograph, c. 1915

8 Municipal lodging house, New York City photograph, January 18, 1917

9 World War I rally at City Hall photograph, c. 1918

10 Curb market on Wall Street photograph, c. 1925

*11 Funeral of Charles Frohman at Temple Emanu-El, 43rd Street and Fifth Avenue photograph, May 26, 1915

12 Rally of American Jewish Conference at Madison Square Park photograph, c. 1940

13 *The Jewish Daily Forward* flashing result of Roosevelt's third-term victory photograph, 1941

14 "Open Palestine for Jewish Immigration" rally at Madison Square Park photograph, c. 1946

IMMIGRATION

15 Liberty Enlightening the World photographed by Edward Bierstadt *The New-York Historical Society*

- 16 "The New Colossus"
by Emma Lazarus
photograph courtesy American Jewish Historical Society
- 17 New York Harbor
photographed by Edward Bierstadt
The New-York Historical Society
- 18 Emma Lazarus
photograph courtesy American Jewish Historical Society
- *19 Castle Garden
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, December 29, 1855
- 20 Appeal of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 1908
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
- 21 Two letters sent to Vienna by immigrants, December, 1882
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
- 22 Between Decks on an Immigrant Ship
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, January 12, 1865
- *23 Steerage
photographed by Alfred Stieglitz
courtesy Jewish Child Care Association of New York
- 24 Jewish Immigrants from Russia
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, August 5, 1882
- *25 Citizenship Class
photograph courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
- 26 Essex Market school
photographed by Jacob A. Riis, c. 1890
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 27 School of the "Melamdim"
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 28 East Side School
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 29 Talmud Torah on Hester Street
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 30 Sabbath in a coal cellar, Ludlow Street, c. 1890
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 31 Sweatshop
photographed by Jacob A. Riis, c. 1889
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 32 Sewing
Ludlow Street, c. 1890
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 33 Moe Levy's Factory
photographed by Byron, c. 1912
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 34 Bohemian cigar makers
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 35 The Old Snuff Man on a Jersey City Ferryboat
drawn by Ben Day, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, March 14, 1874
- 36 Snuff jar
S. Scharlin & Son, Gambetta Snuff
courtesy Mr. James Abbe
- 37 Snuff shop
113 Division Street
photographed by Berenice Abbott, January 26, 1938
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 38 Cigar-store Indian
wood / American, late 19th century
The New-York Historical Society
- 39 Poster: Hoffman House Cigars
The New-York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection
- THE STREETS AND THE MARKETS
- 40 Mulberry Street (between Park and Bayard)
photograph, c. 1870
The New-York Historical Society
- 41 Norfolk and Hester Streets
photograph, c. 1880
The New-York Historical Society, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Leifer
- 42 Hester Street
photograph, c. 1896
The New-York Historical Society
- 43 Hester Street
photographed by Byron, c. 1898
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 44 Hester Street
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 45 Free Lunch, First Avenue
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 46 Market on the Lower East Side
Harper's Weekly, May 3, 1884
- 47 West Washington Market
photograph, c. 1885
The New-York Historical Society
- 48 Figurines in period dress
by the Pamela Sneed Studio
The New-York Historical Society, gift of Mr. Carl Otto von Kienbusch
- 49 Toy wagons and carts
by various makers 19th century
The New-York Historical Society
- 50 Broadway
photograph, c. 1890
The New-York Historical Society
- 51 Poster: The New York Times
The New-York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection
- 52 Poster: George Ehret's Hell Gate Brewery
The New-York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection
- 53 Boys stealing
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 54 The Street Milliner
drawn by Matt Murden
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, November 6, 1875
- 55 Kosher chicken market
55 Hester Street
photographed by Berenice Abbott, February 11, 1937
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 56 Couple in the park
photograph courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
- 57 Ash barrel
photographed by Jacob A. Riis, c. 1888
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 58 Bathtub in an air shaft
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- FROM PEDDLER TO MERCHANT
- 59 The Image Peddler
by Francis W. Edmonds
oil on canvas/c. 1845
The New-York Historical Society
- 60 R. H. Macy, Dealer in Dry Goods
204-206 Sixth Avenue
photograph courtesy Macy's
- 61 R. H. Macy's Christmas Window
14th Street
photograph courtesy Macy's
- *62 Macy's
Herald Square
photograph courtesy Macy's
- 63 Lazarus Straus
photograph courtesy Macy's
- 64 R. H. Macy & Co. jug
The New-York Historical Society
- 65 Abraham and Straus
The New-York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection
- THE JEWISH PRESS
- 66 New York Hebrew Times
photograph courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

67 Home of *The Jewish Daily News*
photographed by Harold B. Perlman
The New-York Historical Society

68 Old man reading *The Jewish Morning Journal*
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

THE JEWISH THEATRE

*69 Mordecai Manuel Noah (1788–1857)
by John Wesley Jarvis
oil on canvas / c. 1845
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

70 Poster: Sarah Bernhardt
The New-York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection

*71 Grand Street Theatre
photographed by Byron, c. 1908
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

72 Poster: *The Dumb Messiah*
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

73 Program: *The Man Within*
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

74 Program: *The Jewish Heart*
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

75 Movie theatre on the Lower East Side
photograph, 1912
The New-York Historical Society

76 *The World of Sholom Aleichem*
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

77 Maurice Schwartz and Jacob Ben-Ami in
Yoshe Kalb
photographed by Maurice Goldberg
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

78 Poster: *The Rabbi's Family*
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

79 *The World of Sholom Aleichem*
drawings by Ben Shahn from the program
courtesy YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

JEWISH CHILD CARE

80 The Hebrew Benevolent and Orphan Asylum
Society
Valentine's Manual, 1869

81 Pleasantville Cottage School
courtesy Jewish Child Care Association of New York

*82 Bar Mitzvah Day, Hebrew National Orphan
Home, Tuckahoe, N.Y., c. 1920
courtesy Jewish Child Care Association of New York

83 Twins at the Hebrew Orphan Asylum
courtesy Jewish Child Care Association of New York

*84 Playground, Henry Street Nurses' Settlement
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

85 Roof playground, Hebrew Institute
photographed by Jacob A. Riis
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

JEWISH HOSPITALS

*86 Jews' Hospital in New York
Valentine's Manual, 1866

87 Resolution of the Board of Directors of Jews'
Hospital
January 26, 1854
courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

88 Mount Sinai Hospital
May 25, 1870
courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

89 Invitation to the Cornerstone Ceremonies,
Mount Sinai Hospital
May 22, 1901
courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

90 Children's ward, Mount Sinai Hospital
photograph courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

*91 Men's ward, Mount Sinai Hospital
photograph courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

92 House Staff of Mount Sinai Hospital
January–June, 1902
photograph courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

93 Dr. Alfred Meyer
photograph courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

94 Montefiore Hospital
courtesy Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center

95 Plan of Montefiore Hospital
courtesy Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center

96 Mount Sinai Hospital ambulance
photograph courtesy Mount Sinai Medical Center

MEDALS

Unless otherwise noted the medals listed below are
from the Samuel Friedenberg Collection, The
Jewish Museum.

97 250th Anniversary of Jewish Settlement in
the United States of America, 1904

98 American Jewish Tercentenary (1654–1954)

*99 Die for a Medal Honoring Gershom M.
Seixas, c. 1812¹

*100 Pitcher (with a cartouche of Gershom M.
Seixas), c. 1815¹

*101 Homage on the Death of Gershom M.
Seixas, 1816

102 One Hundredth Anniversary of Congrega-
tion B'nai Jeshurun, New York City, 1925

103 Benefactor's Medal—Congregation Emanu-
El of the City of New York, 1962

104 The B'nai B'rith Presidents' Medal, to
Gustave L. Levy, 1963

105 Token of Esteem, Congregation Ahawath
Chesed, 1854²

106 Rabbi Samuel B. Hamburger Medal, to
Ella Fred²

107 Three Awards of Merit, Ahawath Chesed,
1893–95²

108 The College of the City of New York
Cromwell Medal, to Jacob R. Schiff, 1898

109 New York Sons of the Revolution Medal,
the College of the City of New York Prize
Essay, to Jacob R. Schiff, 1900

110 Brandeis University Creative Arts Award, to
Meyer Schapiro, 1966

111 The Albert Gallatin Award of New York
University, to Albert S. Sabin, 1955

112 Award of Congress, to Dr. Jonas E. Salk³

113 Jacob Henry Schiff Medal, 1941³

114 David Samoff Medal, 1956³

115 George Frideric Handel Medal of the City
of New York, to Marc Chagall, 1967

116 The Alexander Hamilton Medal of the As-
sociation of the Alumni of Columbia Col-
lege, to Alfred A. Knopf, 1966

117 Leonard Bernstein New York Philharmonic
Medal, c. 1960³

118 Herbert Lehman Israel Award

119 The Sulgrave Institution of New York
Award, to Maud Nathan, 1914

120 Daughters of the American Revolution
Award, to Isaac Mendez Seixas, Lt. Ben-
jamin Mendez Seixas, and Simon Nathan,
1891

121 Washington Inauguration Centennial Medal,
to Frederick Nathan, 1889

122 Phi Beta Kappa Key, to Morris Loeb, 1883

123 Award of the American Institute of New
York, to Joseph Cohen, 1873

124 Medal, Mount Sinai Hospital, 1919

125 National Retail Merchants Association
Award, to Sidney L. Solomon, Chairman of
Abraham and Straus, 1966

126 Public Service Award of *The World*, to
Nathan Straus, 1893

¹ courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

² courtesy Central Synagogue

³ courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

¹ courtesy Museum of the City of New York

127 American Council for Nationalities Service
Golden Door Award, to David Dubinsky,
1965

128 American Council for Nationalities Service
Golden Door Award, to Sol Hurok, 1968

129 Jubilee of the Friedenberg Family in New
York Real Estate, 1969

130 Mendel Gottesman Library of Yeshiva Uni-
versity, 1969

131 West Side Association of Commerce, Inc.
Award, to Bernard F. Gimbel, 1961

132 City of New York Award, to Rabbi Herbert
S. Goldstein, 1964

133 Solomon Schechter Medal, 1915^a

134 David de Sola Pool Medal^a

135 The Daniel Guggenheim Award for Achieve-
ment in Aeronautics, 1928

136 National Arts Club Award, to Leonard
Bernstein, 1968

137 Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Medal,
1962

JEWISH CEREMONIAL ART

138 The Torah and the Talmud
*Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)*
courtesy The Jewish Museum

139 Traveling Ark and Torah
silver and vellum | Italy, 19th century
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

140 Miniature Torah
Poland, late 18th century
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. David M. Vogel

*141 Ark Curtain
*gold appliqué on red velvet | Germany, 1731, with
19th century additions*
courtesy The Jewish Museum

142 Three white Torah covers for the High Holy
Days
courtesy Central Synagogue

143 Torah Wrapper
white linen embroidered in colored silk | Germany, 1812
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Beniguiat Collection

*144 Rimmonim
*by Myer Myers
silver | Newport, Rhode Island, c. 1765*
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

145 Rimmonim
silver | Italy, 18th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

146 Rimmonim
silver | Austria, 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

147 Rimmonim
silver and gilt | Budapest, mid-19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

148 Rimmonim
silver | Netherlands, c. 1830
courtesy Central Synagogue

149 Torah Crown
silver and gilt | Germany, 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Danzig Collection

150 Torah Crown
*silver with semiprecious stones | Eastern Europe, 19th
century, courtesy The Jewish Museum*

151 Torah breastplate
*silver repoussé with semiprecious stones | Germany, late
17th century*
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Mintz Collection

152 Torah breastplate
silver | Poland, 1710
courtesy The Jewish Museum

153 Torah breastplate
silver repoussé | Poland, 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

154 Torah breastplate
silver repoussé | Frankfurt, 1761
courtesy The Jewish Museum

155 Torah breastplate
silver repoussé | Poland or Moravia, late 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

156 Torah breastplate
silver and gilt | Rotterdam, c. 1780
courtesy Central Synagogue

*157 Torah breastplate
silver repoussé and appliqué | 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

*158 Torah breastplate
silver and gilt | Nuremberg, c. 1770
courtesy Central Synagogue

159 Torah breastplate
silver and gilt | Nuremberg, c. 1780
courtesy Central Synagogue

160 Torah breastplate
silver and gilt | Germany, 1790
courtesy Central Synagogue

161 Torah breastplate
silver and gilt | Austria, 1840
courtesy Central Synagogue

162 Torah breastplate
silver repoussé | Russian or Austrian Poland
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

163 Torah breastplate
silver | Eastern Europe
courtesy The Jewish Museum

164 Torah breastplate
silver | Germany, 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

165 Yad
silver | Galicia, 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

166 Circumcision set
*by Lister and Sons
silver | England, 1865-66*
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

167 Platter with scene of circumcision
pewter
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

168 Alms box
pewter
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

PASSOVER IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF JACOB FRANKS, 1730

169 Jacob Franks
*by the de Peyster limner
oil on canvas | New York, c. 1835*
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

*170 Bilah Abigail Franks
*by the de Peyster limner
oil on canvas | New York, c. 1835*
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

171 Phila Franks
*by the de Peyster Limner
oil on canvas | New York, c. 1835*
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society

172 Moses Levy
*by the de Peyster limner
oil on canvas | New York, c. 1835*
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

173 Mrs. Moses Levy (Grace Mcairs)
*by the de Peyster limner
oil on canvas | New York, c. 1835*
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

*174 The Search for Leaven
*Bernard Picart, Cérémonies et coutumes reli-
gieuses de tous les peuples du monde (Amster-
dam, 1739)*
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg

175 Festival prayer book, or mahzor
Italy, 15th century
courtesy The New York Public Library, Louis M.
Rabinowitz Collection

176 Passover scene
*Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)*
courtesy The Jewish Museum

*177 Haggadah
Germany, 1800
courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

^a courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

*178 Collection of pewter
English and American, 18th and 19th centuries
The New-York Historical Society

*179 Sideboard
pine / Pennsylvania, early 18th century
The New-York Historical Society

180 Queen Anne table
mahogany / American, mid-18th century
The New-York Historical Society

181 Queen Anne side chairs
maple / American, early 18th century
The New-York Historical Society

182 Candlesticks
pewter / 17th century
The New-York Historical Society, gift of Mrs.
Katharine Prentiss Murphy

183 Candlestick for searching out leaven
silver
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Bann

184 Elijah Cup
silver / Mobile, Alabama, 1825
courtesy Central Synagogue

185 Queen Anne doll
late 18th century
The New-York Historical Society

186 Miniature furniture and pewter
by various makers, late 18th century
The New-York Historical Society

187 Figurines
by the Pamela Sneed Studio
The New-York Historical Society, gift of Mr. Carl
Otto von Kienbusch

188 Koula rug
wool / Turkey, 19th century
courtesy Karekin Beshir, Ltd.

THE MILL STREET SYNAGOGUE, 1730

189 Mill Street Synagogue, 1730
by Esther H. Oppenheim
courtesy Miss Mona Oppenheim

190 Sabbath
Bernard Picart, Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses
de tous les peuples du monde (Amsterdam,
1739)
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg

JEWISH WEDDING RITUAL

191 Marriage Procession
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

192 Ketubah (marriage contract) of Mordecai
Treves and Eleanor Segre
watercolor on parchment / Italy, 1777
courtesy The Jewish Museum

193 Ketubot of Congregation Shearith Israel
(Marriage Record Book)
1848-77
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

194 Wine goblets
silver / 1836
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

195 Marriage cups
silver / Nuremberg, c. 1850
courtesy Central Synagogue

196 Wedding ring
copper
courtesy Central Synagogue

197 Box for marriage ornaments
leather
courtesy Central Synagogue

CHANUKAH

198 Chanukah
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

199 Traveling menorah
silver / Italy, 17th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

200 Menorah
silver / Germany, 1711
courtesy Central Synagogue

201 Menorah
silver repoussé / Eastern Europe
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

202 Menorah
silver repoussé / Frankfurt, late 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

203 Menorah
silver filigree / Galicia, early 19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

204 Menorah
pewter / Germany, 19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

*205 Menorah
brass / Eastern Europe, c. 1800
courtesy Central Synagogue

206 Menorah
pewter / Germany, c. 1800
courtesy Central Synagogue

207 Menorah
brass / Netherlands, 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

208 Menorah
silver
courtesy Central Synagogue

209 Toys, games, and miniature furniture
by various makers, 18th and 19th centuries
The New-York Historical Society

210 Dreidel
silver and gilt / 20th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

CROSBY STREET SYNAGOGUE, PENTECOST, 1834

*211 Exterior of the Crosby Street Synagogue
by Esther H. Oppenheim
courtesy Miss Mona Oppenheim

*212 Interior of the Crosby Street Synagogue
artist unknown / 1834
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

213 Omer scroll
18th century
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

214 Tallit (prayer shawl) and tefillin
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

215 A scholar
photographed by Arnold Eagle / 1937 (WPA photog-
raphy project)
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

216 Wearing the tefillin
photographed by Arnold Eagle / 1937 (WPA photog-
raphy project)
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

217 Teacher and students
by David Aronson
bronze / American, 1965-69
courtesy Bernard Danenberg Galleries, Inc.

218 Tefillin bag
gold and silver embroidery / 19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman
Collection

219 Prayer by Rev. Isaac B. Seixas spoken at
cornerstone-laying ceremony at Crosby
Street Synagogue
handwritten on paper / 1833
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

220 Tefillin cases
silver-gilt filigree / Poland, 18th-19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

221 Tefillin boxes
silver / Poland, late 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue

THE RECORDS OF CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

222 Record book of Congregation Shearith
Israel, beginning 1729
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

223 Silhouette of Michael Levy

- maker unknown
courtesy Mrs. Henry S. Hendricks
- 224 Silhouette of Mrs. Simon Nathan (Grace Seixas, 1752–1831) and her son Seixas Nathan (1785–1852)
by the Hubard Gallery, New York City
courtesy Mrs. Henry S. Hendricks
- 225 Letter from Paul Revere to Harmon Hendricks, September 27, 1803
The New-York Historical Society, gift of the Hendricks family in honor of Henry S. Hendricks
- 226 Record book in English of Congregation Shearith Israel
1748–51
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 227 Letter copybook of Uriah Hendricks
1758–59
The New-York Historical Society, gift of the Hendricks family in honor of Henry S. Hendricks
- 228 Ledger of Uriah Hendricks
1797–1800
The New-York Historical Society, gift of the Hendricks family in honor of Henry S. Hendricks
- 229 Account book of Congregation Shearith Israel
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 230 Record book of Congregation Shearith Israel
1759–1834
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 231 Miniature Portrait: Rev. Gershom Mendez Seixas
artist unknown
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 232 Letter to Congregation Shearith Israel from Rev. Gershom Mendez Seixas
1783–84
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 233 Treasurer's book of Congregation Shearith Israel
1787–97
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 234 Eighteenth-century inventory of congregational documents of Congregation Shearith Israel
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- *235 Duties of Hazan
1791
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 236 Account book of Congregation Shearith Israel
1797–1804
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- BURIAL—THE FIRST COMMUNAL ACTION BY JEWS
- 237 Death and Mourning Customs
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
- (Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum
- 238 Funeral Ceremony
Bernard Picart, Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde (Amsterdam, 1739)
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg
- *239 Ancient View of the Junction of Pearl and Chatham Streets
Valentine's Manual, 1861
The New-York Historical Society
- 240 The Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Cemetery (near Chatham Square)
photographed by Beecher Ogden
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 241 Lease for burial ground
June 25, 1746
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 242 Agreement creating a Jewish burial ground
November 24, 1730
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel
- 243 Burial society cup
silver | Nuremberg, 1712
courtesy The Jewish Museum
- 244 Israel Baer Kursheedt
by Cephas Thompson
oil on canvas | 1842
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 245 Mrs. Israel Baer Kursheedt
by Cephas Thompson
oil on canvas | 1842
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 246 Will of Joshua Isaacs (senior)
July 13, 1744
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 247 Joshua Isaacs (1744–1810)
artist unknown, oil on canvas | American, c. 1800
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 248 Letter from Gershom Mendez Seixas to his daughter
courtesy American Jewish Historical Society
- 249 Mrs. Joshua Isaacs (Justina Bradley Lazarus)
artist unknown, oil on canvas | American, c. 1800
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- 250 Frances Isaacs
artist unknown, oil on canvas | American, c. 1800
courtesy Museum of the City of New York
- SUCCOTH
- *251 Succoth
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel (Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum
- 252 Ethrog holder
Middle Europe, c. 1790
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 253 Collections of Tiffany glass and mercury glass
The New-York Historical Society
- 254 Two Stars of David
stained glass | 19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman Collection
- 255 The Temple in Jerusalem
embroidered silk | c. 1840
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 256 Passover banner
embroidery | Germany, c. 1800
- 257 Karabagh rug
wool | Transcaucasia, 19th century
courtesy Karckin Beshir, Ltd.
courtesy Central Synagogue
- PURIM
- 258 The Krause Children: Hannah, Reuben, and Daniel
by Frederick William Herring
oil on canvas | 1856
The New-York Historical Society
- 259 The Purim Ball
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 1, 1865
- 260 Purim
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel (Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum
- 261 Megillah holder
silver | Germany, late 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 262 Grager
silver | Western Europe, 19th century
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 263 Grager
oak and brass | Poland, 19th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman Collection
- 264 Purim Megillah
parchment | 17th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum
- 265 Megillah holder
silver with semiprecious stones | Central Europe, c. 1800
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 266 Megillah holder
Eastern influence, c. 1840
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 267 Yad
silver and coral
courtesy Central Synagogue
- 268 Children's rattles
attributed to George Unite
silver-gilt and coral | England, c. 1865
The New-York Historical Society
- 269 Purim plate

pewter / Netherlands, c. 1776
courtesy Central Synagogue

THE HIGH HOLY DAYS

270 Shofar
engraved ram's horn
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

271 Rosh Hashanah
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

*272 The Moon Worshipers
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

*273 The Moon Worshipers
by David Aronson
bronze / American, 1963-69
According to an old custom among certain Orthodox Jews, the day preceding the New Moon was observed with fasting as a "Minor Yom Kippur"; the order of service (see cat. nos. 272, 273) included penitential prayers at midnight.
courtesy Bernard Danenberg Galleries, Inc.

274 Festival prayer book, or mahzor
by David bar Pesah
Rhine Valley, 1380
courtesy the New York Public Library, Louis M. Rabinowitz Collection
The book is open to the Kol Nidre service

275 Yad
silver
courtesy The Jewish Museum

276 Yad
silver and gilt / modern
courtesy Central Synagogue

277 Kiddush cup
silver / Germany, c. 1830
courtesy Central Synagogue

278 The Burning Bush
by George A. Curtis
welded brass and copper / 1959
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Martin Leifer

279 Cohanim (Priests) Blessing the People
illustration from Richard Wheatley, "The Jews in New York," Century Magazine, January-February, 1892

280 Procession of the Sepharim
illustration from Richard Wheatley, "The Jews in New York," Century Magazine, January-February, 1892

*281 Decalogue: Tablets of Moses
painted wood / 19th century, from a synagogue near New Haven
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

282 The Judges
by David Aronson

bronze / American, 1961
courtesy Bernard Danenberg Galleries, Inc.

*283 Decalogue: Tablets of Moses
attributed to Marcus Charles Illions
wood / late 19th century
courtesy Mr. Allan Daniel

284 The Abodah
illustration from Richard Wheatley, "The Jews in New York," Century Magazine January-February, 1892

SOME NEW YORK SYNAGOGUES

285 Congregation Shearith Israel
5 West 19th Street
photograph, 1898
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

*286 B'nai Jeshurun Temple
Greene Street between Houston and Bleeker
woodcut from The Great Metropolis: or, New-York Almanac (1852)
courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

*287 Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street
(old Temple Emanu-El, lower right)
by Max Williams, from photograph (1879) by John Bachman
lithograph / 1904
courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

288 Temple Emanu-El
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 1869
courtesy Mr. Daniel M. Friedenberg

289 Temple Emanu-El
photographed by Philip G. Bartlett, 1927
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

*290 K'h'al Adath Jeshurun Synagogue
artist unknown, watercolor / 1886
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

291 Floor plan, Temple Ahawath Chesed
(Central Synagogue)
courtesy Central Synagogue

292 Temple Ahawath Chesed
(Central Synagogue)
Lexington Avenue at 55th Street
photographed by Charles K. Bill, c. 1870
courtesy Central Synagogue

293 Confirmation, 1921
photograph courtesy Central Synagogue

294 New Sabbath Service
courtesy Central Synagogue

295 Program of the Cornerstone Rededication
Ceremonies, December 13, 1970
courtesy Central Synagogue

296 Program of the Centennial Celebration
courtesy Central Synagogue

297 Central Synagogue
by J. P. Manslip

watercolor / 1968
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. David O. Kuh

298 Central Synagogue
Lexington Avenue at 55th Street
photograph courtesy Central Synagogue

THE SABBATH

299 Mezuzah
wood / German, 18th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

300 Sabbath at Home and in the Synagogue
Paul Christian Kirchner, Jüdisches Ceremoniel
(Nuremberg, 1726)
courtesy The Jewish Museum

301 Lighting the Sabbath Lamp
Bernard Picart, Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde (Amsterdam, 1739)
courtesy Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg

*302 Lighting the Sabbath candles
photographed by Arnold Eagle / 1937 (WPA photography project)
courtesy Museum of the City of New York

*303 Reading from the Scroll
illustration from Richard Wheatley, "The Jews in New York," Century Magazine, January-February, 1892

304 Sabbath lamp
pewter / 18th century
courtesy Mr. Ralph R. Baum

305 Sabbath lamp
brass / 18th century
courtesy Congregation Shearith Israel

306 Mahzor case
silver-gilt / Prague, 1810
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman Collection

307 Mahzor cover
silver, repoussé and cut out / Netherlands, 1879
courtesy The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman Collection

308 Mahzor cover
embossed silver / Netherlands, 20th century
courtesy The Jewish Museum

309 Prayer for God's blessing
bronze frame
courtesy Central Synagogue

310 The Patriarch
by David Aronson
bronze / 1965
courtesy Bernard Danenberg Galleries, Inc.

311 Kiddush cup
silver / 1759
courtesy Central Synagogue

312 Kiddush glass
Austria, 1836

- courtesy *The Jewish Museum, Harry G. Friedman Collection*
- 313 Spice holder
silver-gilt filigree / Eastern Europe, c. 1780
courtesy *Central Synagogue*
- *314 Spice container
silver filigree / Galicia, late 18th century
courtesy *The Jewish Museum*
- 315 Spice box
silver / Western Europe, early 19th century
courtesy *Central Synagogue*
- 316 Spice holder
silver
courtesy *Mrs. John Kean*
- 317 Spice holder in flower form
silver / European, 18th century
courtesy *Central Synagogue*
- *318 New Amsterdam
by *Laurens Block*
watercolor / 1650
The New-York Historical Society, gift of C. E. Detmold
- 319 Sabbath Service
Bernard Picart, Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde (Amsterdam, 1739)
courtesy *Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Ginsburg*
- 320 Spice holder in fish form
silver / Poland
courtesy *Central Synagogue*
- 321 Spice box and candleholder
silver / German, late 18th century
courtesy *The Jewish Museum*
- 322 Candleholder
brass / English
The New-York Historical Society, gift of Mrs. Katharine Prentis Murphy

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Historic Central Synagogue

by Herbert Schwarz



"The New Jewish Synagogue, corner of Fifty-fifth Street and Lexington Avenue, New York." Engraving of Central Synagogue by S. Fox, after a photograph by Rockwood, from *Harper's Weekly*, July 6, 1872

Although we are observing the one-hundredth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of Central Synagogue, the beginnings of our historic congregation go back at least another quarter century. For each of the two congregations which consolidated in 1898 to become Central Synagogue was founded years before on New York's Lower East Side. At its inception in 1839, the Congregation Shaar Hashomayim (Gate of Heaven) worshiped on Attorney Street; the Congregation Ahawath Chesed (Love of Mercy) held its first services on Ludlow Street in 1846.

Having come to America, the land of hope and freedom, without means, without friends to welcome them, and with no organized philanthropic societies to help solve their problems, our founders depended on their own vigor and devotion to sustain them in their new venture. In the difficult circumstances of these early days, one of their chief resources was the synagogue.

Throughout its long history, Central Synagogue has

been blessed with a membership of loyal, responsible, and respected people in all walks of life. The congregation has survived because its members, through the years, have possessed a determination to maintain the best of their heritage as Jews. No congregation has been more concerned with the quality of its ministry than has Central Synagogue, and probably none has contributed a greater number of distinguished leaders and teachers. The religious services in which we join together in our historic old synagogue are sources of inspiration and occasions for grateful prayer.

Apart from our religious endeavors, the members of Central Synagogue have continually sought to approach contemporary problems in the spirit of Jewish prophetic idealism. Men and women alike have been identified with the highest aspirations in community service.

We of Central Synagogue have every right to be proud of our long and distinguished record.

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Executive Director: Barry E. Kugel

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